

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EC, EPAP, US
SUBJECT: EC INGREDIENT LABELING ON WINE AND SPIRITS

REF: (A) STATE 282694, (B) EC BRUSSELS A-20, (C) 75 STATE 105421

1. IN A VISIT EARLIER THIS FALL, REPRESENTATIVES OF US SPIRITS
INDUSTRY, O'BRIEN AND CRICHTON (REFTEL A), WERE ENCOURAGED
THAT THE US GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY DEEPLY INVOLVED IN
AVOIDING BARRIERS TO US SHIPMENT OF WINES AND SPIRITS
TO THE COMMUNITY. WE EXPLAINED TO THEM THE STATUS OF
DISCUSSIONS SO FAR ON CERTIFICATES AND GENERAL LABELING.
THEY WERE, HOWEVER, ALSO INTERESTED IN THE COMMISSION
PROPOSAL TO REQUIRE INGREDIENT LABELING ON TRADE IN
WINE AND SPIRITS (REF B). WE TOLD THEM THAT SO FAR
THIS ISSUE HAD NOT ENTERED INTO US-EC WINE CONSULTA-
TIONS. THEY POINTED OUT THAT THIS COULD ALSO BE A
BARRIER TO TRADE. (NOTE, WE HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY FOUND
OUT THAT THERE IS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF OPPOSITION WITHIN
THE COMMISSION TO THE INCLUSION OF WINE AND SPIRITS
IN THE INGREDIENT LABELING IN THE UNITED STATES. THEY SAID
US INDUSTRY HAD ARGUED STRONGLY AGAINST SUCH INGREDIENT
LABELING, USING MUCH THE SAME ARGUMENTS AS THOSE
EMPLOYED BY THE COMMUNITY AGAINST US INGREDIENT
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LABELING (REF C). WE DO NOT KNOW STATUS OF USG
DECISION ON WHETHER TO APPEAL THE LOWER COURT
RULLING BUT BELIEVE THAT THE PROSPECT THAT THE UNITED
STATES WILL NOT IMPOSE INGREDIENT LABELING SHOULD BE
FACTORED INTO OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY TO
AVOID COMMUNITY INGREDIENT LABELING THAT WOULD ALSO

BE HARMFUL TO OUR TRADE. (OUR VISITRS' INTEREST
SEEMED TO BE MORE IN THE EFFECT THAT THIS LATTER
WOULD HAVE ON THEIR PRODUCTION FACILITIES WITHIN THE
COMMUNITY, INCLUDING US SUBSIDIARIES, THAN BY ACTUAL
SHIPMENTS FROM THE UNITED STATES.) CONSEQUENTLY,
WE WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON TELLING US WHAT WE
CAN SAY TO COMMISSION OFFICIALS ABOUT THE COURT DECISION,
THUS ALLOWING US TO TURN AROUND ON THEM THE SAME
ARGUMENTS THEY USED ON US (REF C) TO DISCOURAGE
INGREDIENT LABELING IN THE COMMUNITY. THIS IS AN
ASPECT WHICH SHOULD BE HANDLED IN ANY FURTHER US-COMMUNITY
WINE/SPIRIT DISCUSSIONS. HINTON

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